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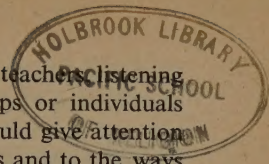
LETTER

Dear friends :

I want to share with you in this newsletter some of the impressions which I have gathered in my recent visits to European universities. Academic travel is, it seems, frequently misleading. It tends to move in a closed circle, or tends to be objective observation ; it may be undermined by the pleasantries of gracious hosts, or depressing by the sheer similarities of what one sees and hears. Political issues, reports on other distant, and sometimes overly-romanticized, places, and the comparing of notes in one's own academic discipline may guarantee further against accuracies in impressions of actual university life. Then, too, the academic traveller cannot see everything ; he keeps a healthy distance from ordinary affairs in the universities and the occasions are somewhat contrived. There is a kind of artificiality in what the visitor sees and the air he breathes. After all, universities are not buildings, facilities, comfortable lounges, and libraries on whose walls hang pictures of the founding fathers. The hard give-and-take of ideas — if that is present — and all the nuances of the academic procession demand more exacting, more casual, and less one-sided observation than is permitted the academic traveller with an itinerary. Those of you who continue will, I hope, keep these limitations in mind, and forgive me for any additional limitations which may seem all too obvious.

The purpose of a four- or five-month visit in universities of Berlin and some of the countries of Western Europe was simple enough. Within the WSCF there is a University Teachers' Committee, whose aim includes that of "seeking to be a means of communication among Christians who are university teachers". The communication we seek to have concerns primarily an understanding of the tasks which our universities are called to perform and of our own vocations within them as Christians in the work of research, scholarship, and teaching. There are, in a number of countries at least, groups and organizations designed to promote such communication ; in other countries, particularly in Western Europe, they do not exist. The aim of this academic traveller was to serve as a means of communication, reporting on the

Cover : Pagoda courtyard and temples in Rangoon, site of first WSCF "Life and Mission of the Church" conference



interests, problems, and activities of other Christian university teachers listening to these as they might be available to him among the groups or individuals gathered, and to engage in the kinds of dialogue which would give attention both to the present state and the future hopes of universities and to the ways of Christian obedience within their life and work. I was once quite accurately introduced as a "mobile conference". Not a straightforward scholarly project; but neither was it anti- or un-academic. The premise was that the Christian critique and hope for the university was expressed out of love for the communities of learning and out of a concern that they might be what they are called to be at best in the present-day world.

Discussions began in Paris, en route as it were between the landing of the "United States" at Le Havre and Geneva. The wide halls of the Sorbonne became narrower as I made my way to a room where I was to meet a fellow philosopher. For a long time we pursued questions regarding our specialized philosophical interests. Then there was the question of concern for the university. Immediately we were in a wide world, and I heard him say that already a sub-division of a university represented more than that for which one might legitimately *be* responsible. How then can one be responsible for other parts of the university, whose constituents one may never see and which is so distant geographically that one does not know its map? Again and again the same kind of picture became vivid — the large, divided, and heterogeneous university, whose only unity may exist in that all the parts are identified by the same general name and have the same general administration. Where administration is almost non-existent, at least in an American's view, even such unity may be almost non-existent. I had been brought up against a real problem, and had heard a devout and intelligent Christian confess that he could not see how one might assume a total responsibility for a university. If anything, I felt that it had been too easily assumed at my end that this might be possible when I had had the University, and not a concrete university, in mind.

In Western Germany, the past heritage of the universities seemed to continue to be their contemporary context. Taking into account major changes which had taken place in the nineteenth century, they seemed to be very much like the universities I had read about. Their traditions are their living guides; perhaps they need pay so little attention to administration, because they are virtually administered by their traditions and thus protect at the same time the almost complete autonomy of the professor. Lectures and finally examinations of students are the main courses in the diet; what appears as extreme individualism makes for hard intellectual work for both teachers and students. Little so-called extra-curricular life gives the impression that they exist only for knowledge. But some of the conversations revealed to me how mistaken were the appearances.

The affairs and patterns of a technologically organized world are severely felt within the universities. Within the formal structures which seem so

unchanged, the training of intellectuals is largely along the lines of pure scientific knowledge and methodology. What continues in the way of humanistic and cultural motifs has been put on a defensive or is transformed into dominant scientific patterns of thought. Against this background, I understood an elderly humanist who regretfully confessed that he believed the true university's day was past. He saw no way of its continuing to give priority to a view of man or of culture which transcended modes of contemporary technological thought. A number of others, in other conversations and discussions, went so far as to insist that the search for truth, by which we like to characterize the university as a distinct community, is almost impossible; instead, they said, the need for competency has become all-important.

Some discussions in Berlin made real the problems of the university teacher in the East Zone of Germany. From all that I heard, the D.D.R. could not be said to offer compelling evidence for theories of progressive directions in history. Freedom exists for those old enough to be outlived; resignation in the face of indefinite continuation of the regime is the deeper mood. The Christian intelligentsia deplored the lack of creative scholarship; they evidenced despair in a troubled mood and saw no real openings for reconstruction and reform. They confessed that fatigue was perhaps the hardest of all — fatigue born of the need to assess each situation for decision anew, since they were shorn of all continuing principles, which made ready reference impossible. Yet, they insisted that one could not identify their situation as one of total evil; they were not practising their professions for any personal gain; they were desirous of the kinds of responsibility which made living above absolute cynicism possible. The personal strength of men and women, undergirded by a hope which has no immediate empirical supports, seemed the most striking impression. When after intensive discussion for a long day a member

The Free University, Berlin

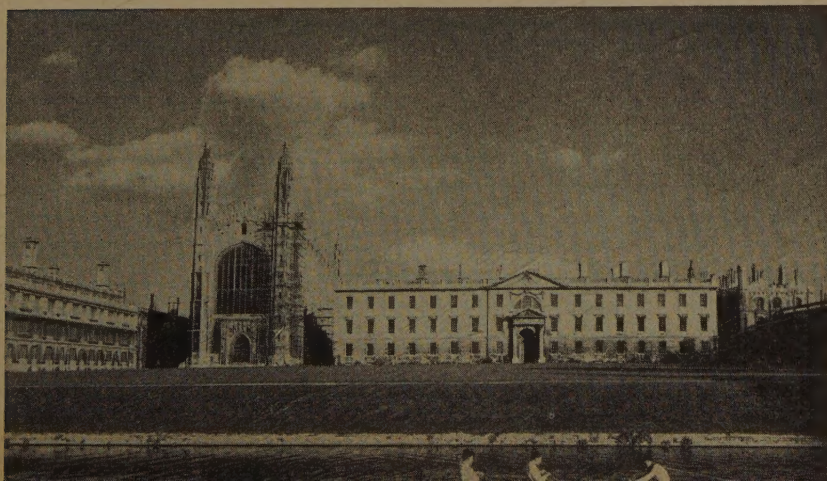


of the group read Psalm 46, I felt as though I had never before heard the words: "God is our refuge and strength; a very present help in time of trouble".

Some of the most penetrating discussion of university questions in Western society took place, it seemed to me, in the visits in the four Nordic countries. Well established universities in each of the countries have a long heritage of continental academic traditions; but they have not become fixed and are, it seems, open to changes and critical reflection. A number of living rooms were the scenes of conversation at fundamental levels; and, during a final week, just before Easter, the Sigtuna Foundation served as host for a Christian university teachers' conference, the first of its kind in that part of the world. How the university may be conceived in the present-day world, how universities may perform the complex task, in various faculties, of "many-sidedness" in the approach for truth, and how universities might therefore transcend, even in limited ways, the negative relativism of a technical society — these questions among others were given serious discussion and thought. An on-going debate is taking place; the issues are not as yet fully defined; but the ferment is real and continuing critical reflection can be expected.

Both "Oxbridge" and "Redbrick" universities were on the itinerary in Britain, and the weeks spent in eight or more universities were very pleasant. Despite general commonalities of language, I often felt, however, as though I understood as little of what was said as if one of the continental languages had been used; I recalled that someone had once said in effect that the use of English by Americans and the English is perhaps the root cause of their misunderstanding each other so readily. But the continuing and vitally alive tradition of scholarship and teaching which has characterized the universities of Britain is still their strong asset today. Something of what others call "democratization" has taken place in the universities; relationships are, in

King's College and Chapel, and at left Clare College, at the University of Cambridge



some places at least, less personal ; and there were even complaints by some that the traditional exercise of university authority by teachers was being relinquished in favour of more administrative decisions. But teaching takes place in what appears to be an enviable direct relationship ; the whole life of a student is of concern ; and something of a community exists, even in some of the "Redbrick" institutions.

The critical frame of mind with respect to university education in Britain may not, at the moment, seem as intense as it was in the years immediately following World War II. Moberly's work is still a major reference ; he is himself, even in retirement in Oxford, as keen in his views as ever. But many confess that something of the same kind of sharpness in new situations today has been lost. Christian university teachers, through the University Teachers' Group, do continue to hold conferences, and their work, on more confined issues, is penetrating and significant. In England, as in countries of the continent, this moment of history seems "post-Christian". But the key leaders and new younger intellectuals are already not only aware of this situation but seeking ways of breaking through it.

A period of five days of intensive discussion in the Netherlands had been well prepared for and was excellently arranged. Cooperative patterns of work, so difficult to achieve at times among confessional and denominational differences, are likely to be increased. Young leaders among Christian university teachers are seeking initiative in more responsible continuing discussion and study. And even groups of students are keenly interested in the kinds of issues which have emerged over recent years in the former "University Commission". This is a firm basis upon which the energetic can build.

The whole of this brief sketch is encouraging for those who seek new ways in the consideration of university life, Christian faith, and the relations between them. Perhaps the basic encouragement comes from the fact of indigenous student Christian movements and student congregations. With their continuing ministries, not only in pastoral ways but also in intellectual terms, the great need for authentic humanistic dimensions, which is so urgent everywhere, may yet be met among the universities in Europe and in England. The great problem continues to be that of discovering ways of relating meaningfully to the secular world, the world of universities' studies and living. All fields have, we may say, ceased to reckon with a religious view of the world ; they are bent towards immediate methodologies, with which to solve concrete questions, and with empirical investigations of the phenomena of human knowledge. But perhaps we may yet come to know what Bonhoeffer meant when he said that "now that it has come of age, the world is more godless and perhaps for that reason nearer to God than ever before". For Christian and non-Christian alike, the challenge is still this : that knowledge may abound in love.

Yours sincerely,
J. EDWARD DIRKS.

An "Agnostic" Weekend

ANNE E. ALBRIGHT and ALAN McLACHLIN

For a number of years the Freshman Handbook, given out in the fall at the University of Toronto, has given advance notice of an "Agnostic Weekend", a retreat at the end of January at the Hart House Caledon Hills Farm. The weekend is sponsored by the Student Christian Movement. Why are we organizing student gatherings under such a title? This is a particular witness the SCM believes it is called upon to make in the university. Let me try to explain why we feel this way.

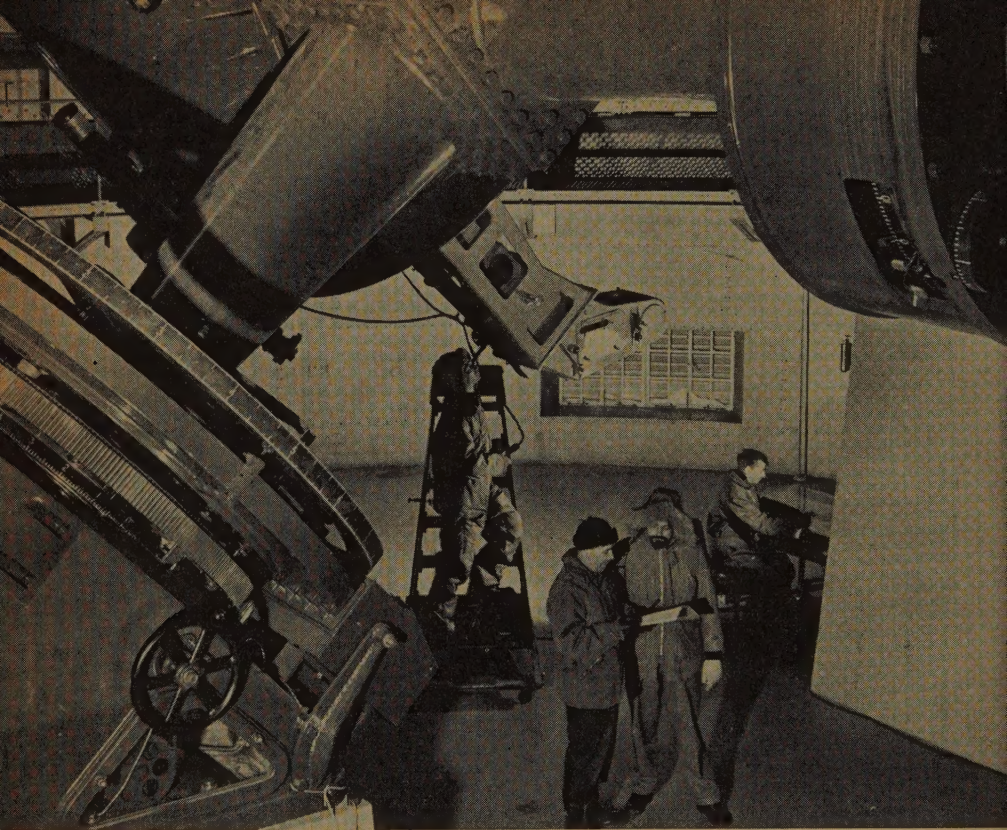
We come to university primarily for the development of our minds. It is a stimulating experience which may prove almost overwhelming. A young man enters an intellectual world where, on first encounter, sciences and philosophies often seem to deny the Christian faith of his childhood. How should he meet such a challenge? Unfortunately, he may take one of two false paths which many young Christians choose. Feeling himself under attack, or at least under pressure, he may resolve his tension either by discarding his faith as outworn and inadequate, or by holding to it with a blind fanaticism, avoiding any reasoned examination of what is sacred to him.

We believe it is part of the SCM's task in the university to challenge the maturity of both of these reactions. If the student rushes into agnosticism, he has accepted as valid some of the criticism of Christian faith raised by various adult disciplines of thought. He may not, however, have listened carefully to adult Christian replies to the criticism, or critical analysis of the grounds of criticism itself. Too often the non-believer who influences the young student has made no serious study of the claims of Christian faith, but has rejected something that few Christians are anxious to hold on to.

On the other hand, if the student rushes into a rigid and uncritical position of dogmatic belief, he has been equally robbed. None of us was meant to compartmentalize his mind into academic discipline and Christian devotion, never allowing faith and reason to meet or illumine one another. Christianity has much to say to the newly acquired knowledge of a university education, and in its turn can be vastly enriched from the academic life.

To the Christian in the university, whether he be student or faculty member, it becomes increasingly clear that faith includes sincere confidence in the claim of Jesus Christ to be himself the Truth. There are no challenges to our faith which we need fear — or indeed, which we dare to bypass. Psychological explanations of religious experience, thoroughgoing relativism of social and moral standards, the modern explanations of the meaning of life which presuppose there is no God, the overwhelming impact of technology, symbolized by Sputnik in the sky — these things disturb students, and ought to. But we must examine them honestly, not with a rash discarding of the Truth in Christ we have received to date, but with the firm assurance that we shall not be abandoned in our further search.

Perhaps I should emphasize further the peril of retreat from the intellectual encounter with unbelief. Many Christians outside of the university may not realize how sorely tempted we within this community of learning



Dunlap Observatory, University of Toronto, Canada

are to be double-minded. But if we retreat from the rigour of examining challenges to faith — if we become protective and dogmatic about our faith, or conventionally unthinking, then we deny that Christ is the Truth, and ignore our responsibility to use fully the powers of mind with which God has endowed us. We reject the freedom given to us in exchange for an illusory security. And we betray others. We limit not only God's work with our own minds but his will for us to be bearers of the truth to others. Perhaps you are all too familiar with the double-minded Christian man; for him evangelism is only the welcoming of another to a held position, and never a journeying with the other through doubt and search to faith.

And therefore — the Agnostic Weekend. The SCM students invite a wide and varied group to join in discussing Christian and non-Christian outlooks. Christians, atheists, agnostics, and humanists: it does not matter what each calls himself, as long as he is willing to speak the truth and listen with respect. Two leaders are invited, usually professors, one to present a humanist position, the other a Christian stand. Discussion follows each of two main addresses, first with the whole group of about forty students ques-

tioning the speaker, then in smaller gatherings of eight to ten. The talk goes on — often far into the night, for the time is precious.

Of course a weekend is much too short a time for such an encounter — but even too little time is better than no time for encounter at all. The chief value every year proves to be the discovery by both Christians and non-Christians that the others are human. The stereotyped pictures we have of one another are inadequate and misleading. Humanists find that with some of us Christians it is possible to reason. Christians find their unbelieving friends may have taken more seriously than we have ourselves the barriers there are to faith; many who say they do not believe are more passionate seekers than we who too easily pay homage to our Lord. At the end of the weekend, everyone says "But we are only starting!", and they are right. But it is a start — a start in searching for common points of departure, a start in attempting to find words which mean the same thing to both groups, a start in reliving the reconciliation between man and man and between God and man.

It should be no surprise to you to learn that much hot air rises over the weekend, and many flimsy arguments are advanced, and not all of them demolished. There are few great intellects among us. But we are all people, and we know that the intellect is not the totality of man. Jesus Christ claims the loyalty and commitment not only of our minds, but of the whole person, and students who come to such an Agnostic Weekend have other needs to be met alongside their intellectual difficulties. The SCM's task is to speak not only to the minds of students but to their personal and social needs as well. In the university as elsewhere people feel alienated not only from God but from one another; hundreds do not know where to turn for friendship. We try to offer a Christian community of fellowship, that students may find a place to be reconciled one to another as well as to God. Essential to such a community is the acceptance of students for what they are, where they are, and a willingness to share with them whatever friendship we can. We try to make it clear there are no hosts and guests, simply friends together; the Christians and humanists at the Agnostic Weekend share equally, not only in the search for truth, but in all the activities that increase common experience and understanding. Discussions count, but so do meals eaten together, dishes washed, chores done about the farm, walks in the woods and saunas by the rock quarry, and the dancing and singing and foolishness of a good Saturday night party.

Early Sunday morning at worship the Christian students, and others if they wish, gather to acknowledge the presence of the Lord of Truth in their midst. We ask for help as we seek to love and respect our fellow students who cannot think or believe as we. Must not our prayer be, not only once a year, but constantly, that we do not exclude the unbelieving, or ignore them, but that we be empowered to open to them our own minds, insofar as we have the mind of Christ?

The Agnostic Weekend is not an isolated part of our work. We seek constantly to provide such opportunities for encounter between Christian and non-Christian. This is evangelism, the hardest sort of evangelism, but the particular task of a Christian student fellowship in the university committed to growth in the faith which should stop short of nothing less than the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

The Church in the East-West Conflict

INGEMAR LINDBLAD¹

A Swedish social scientist, asked to report on the attitude of the churches in Sweden vis-à-vis the East-West conflict from a student point of view, is duty bound to begin by stating three emphatic reservations.

First, about the nature of the conflict itself. We will not accept the geographic description offered, as we will not buy the United States line that it is all about a struggle between a "free" world and an enslaved one. This simpleton point of view pitches a NATO member like Portugal against a Warsaw Pact member like Poland as examples of white and black. It is well known that Sweden is thoroughly "western" in its sympathies, yet I am certain that the great majority of informed people here would pick Poland as the more free and decent of the two countries.

Second, about the churches. I cannot honestly write "the church", because the Lutheran state church and the Free churches, of equal strength, are definitely separate entities, even if cooperation is often good. The attitude of the people of Sweden, with the exception of the four to five per cent communist voters, towards the great issues in the post-war world has been remarkably unanimous. As this attitude — preparedness, political neutrality, a cool realization of the Soviet menace, an intense desire for a more secure peace — also fits very well into the thinking of our churches, there has seemed to be no obvious or pressing reason why the churches should become engaged in these matters, as churches. A great many individual Christians have, of course, been prominent in influencing Swedish policy and in pressing for more international commitments.

Third, about students. There are probably few nations in the world today where students, and academically trained people of all ages, play such an insignificant part in public affairs and in moulding public opinion as in Sweden. When we compare our situation with the preponderance of university trainees in both British political parties, or with the role assumed by students in newly awakened nations in Asia, we find the difference is astounding. It would be interesting to get to the root of this condition, but my space does not suffice for that. On the other hand, the working classes in Sweden and its Scandinavian neighbours have provided political and community leadership to an extent unknown anywhere else. Trade union membership is here a far more likely background to a political career than a university degree.

If, then, the overwhelming majority of Swedes accept the official "line" on world politics and let their (working-class) leaders lay it down virtually undisturbed, what is this line? In a word, it is "neutrality" but not "neutrality". The accidents of European power politics have given Sweden a chance to stand aside from the cruel engagements fought out around us since 1815. What began as a matter of practical politics has become in some places a revered dogma: upon our faithfulness to it depends our continued moral superiority in an evil world. Outside the Foreign Office, more realistic

¹ See *Federation News*, 2 and 3, 1958, for articles on this subject by Canadian and Indian students.

minds see neutrality as offering a great opportunity to contribute towards international understanding in an age which badly needs it. And, in a very real way, Sweden has been able to bridge some crevices on the long and unsafe road from Moscow to the West. We have provided Mr. Hammarskjöld, and a host of lesser officials whose work in many places has had some significance.

Swedish Christians not only support this policy, but have found some approaches of their own. One is the private relief and rehabilitation organization known as "Intra-European Mission", launched after the last war under state church auspices but soon accepted as a common, ecumenical responsibility. Another is the contacts with Christian groups behind the "Iron Curtain" open to Swedes if not to Britons or Americans. Many of our most prominent leaders have visited brethren in the faith in the Baptist churches of Moscow, and in the churches in China. They have also brought back pictures of life under communism which have had more nuances than those which are common an ocean further west.

Lest misunderstandings creep in, I hasten to assure readers that the kind of coexistence advocated by the Dean of Canterbury and, I am afraid, by some Asian leaders, is not favoured here. There have been far too many Estonian and Latvian refugees arriving in little open boats, far too many Swedes who fought for Finland in 1939-1940, altogether far too many facts gained from very close neighbours, for such illusions to flourish. If an infinitesimal "left" fringe of non-Christian writers has been vague to the point of fellow-travelling in recent years, and if we remember another infinitesimal fringe which found something to be said for Hitler, this still leaves the ninety-five non-communist per cent behind "neutrality, not neutralism".

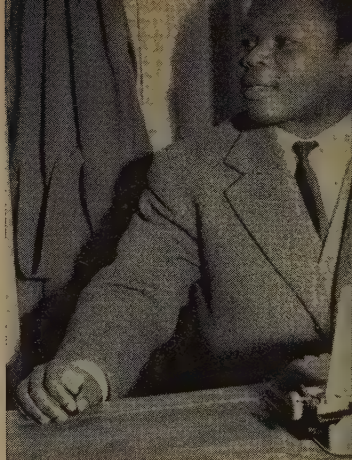
The general position thus stated, we must turn back to the churches and the students. I am afraid that everything positive has now been said and a confession of sins is due. They are sins of omission, but none the less grave for that. Sweden has too long been basically isolationist (like the old West in America: domestically progressive, internationally "do not disturb"). The churches and the students are guilty on the same charge, the missionary work exempted. Only today is there a more general awakening, more or less coinciding with a new generation coming of age. Today, every child is taught English at school. Today, prosperity has put foreign travel within the easy reach of wage-earners and farmers as well as middle-class people. Today, an awareness of the outside world is being deliberately fostered by the schools, by the trade unions, by the press, by the churches, yes, even by some daring politicians with safe seats.

But the change is coming late: this *may* be a very late day in the life of mankind. The conflict between the communist bloc and its Atlantic adversaries could mean the end of civilization, if it is not soon mitigated. Those who realize this have the immense task of convincing the many who do not, out of ignorance or hardness of mind. It is sad but true that we must work among our own fellow students and church-goers that they may in turn make their weight felt in society at large. A student must have no illusions about the general awareness of either the churches or the majority of people concerning the nature of the conflict we live with. He must do his utmost to cultivate more of this awareness.

DO THEY NEED A CHAPLAIN ?

E. MALO

Pastor for African Students in Paris



JUST as a mother's thoughts follow her child everywhere, so do the Protestant churches in Africa show their spiritual care for their ever-dear children in Paris by providing a chaplain for them.

The setting in which these young people are called to live raises many questions which they had never asked themselves before ; on the other hand their presence asks questions equally of their surroundings. They are confronted by political, social, psychological, and especially moral and spiritual problems which generally shock them deeply. How do they react ? How do they register their reactions on the spot (and in Africa) ? Which path will they follow when the choice is forced upon them, what attitude will they adopt ? As one of them said recently : "People don't know what dangers they face when they come to France...". This chaplain is here to try to limit these dangers as far as possible, especially on the religious, moral, and spiritual plane.

In Paris my activities are those of a parish pastor. The African Protestant community, which has been inconspicuous for some years, is growing stronger and looks like becoming before long a parish grouping students of all confessions : Reformed, Baptist, Presbyterian, Methodist, Lutheran, etc. — in short, ecumenism on a small scale. Besides the pastoral activities, the cure of souls and sick-visiting are the chief occupations. There is also all the material side : finding rooms, persuading boarding-houses, hostels, student homes, and families to take them in, with all that that requires of moral and financial guarantees ; helping those in need by recommending them to such and such a Paris diaconate, in brief doing something for them. The difficulty lies in their failure to keep their side of the bargain, which is discouraging ; but it is no reason for leaving them to manage by themselves, because one has been deceived by this one or that. Day after day one has to track down those whom one has not yet found.

In Paris as in the provinces, I give them as many opportunities to talk to each other and discuss other topics than their political preoccupations, which though not bad or undesirable in themselves become subject to criticism when they tend to dominate all their existence. I remind them, if only by my presence, that the African (therefore each one of them) is, chiefly and by his very nature, a man of faith before he is a man of learning, and that they are not to make the mistake of exchanging the Christianity which they lived in their own country for any ideology whatever, even if it promises them no end of wonders. On the contrary, they must try to find their way among the new truths of the Gospel as now revealed to them, and thus prepare themselves for their responsibilities to their churches when they return to Africa. In collaboration with the pastors in the university towns especially, I try to interest them in parish life to which many are becoming increasingly indifferent, and that is not easy either. My task is therefore chiefly a matter of individual contacts, with those who want them, of course, to try to help them solve their personal difficulties, to understand and to counsel them. So with one I shall discuss the special problems raised by his marriage or the choice of his fiancée; with another I shall study the way out of the dangerous moral situation in which he is being engulfed, by helping him to win back the trust which others had withdrawn from him; and I shall try to help a third to get into touch again with his family with whom he broke some time ago, ceasing to write to them, because he bore them a grudge for leaving him without funds, perhaps not taking sufficient account of changes in their financial position.

Results? I could not presume to speak of them; I only feel sure that the Master will find something to his glory in this work.

Pastor Malo with his congregation



Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God ; for no one can do these signs that you do, unless God is with him". Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God". Nicodemus said to him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born anew'. The wind blows where it wills, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know whence it comes or whither it goes ; so it is with every one who is born of the Spirit." Nicodemus said to him, "How can this be?"

Thy Will

"PRIDE takes such a natural hold of us amid our misery and error. We even lay down life gladly, provided men talk of it." Pascal.

In a passage from *Self-Examination* Kierkegaard writes: "In order to see yourself in the mirror when you read God's word, you must remember to be constantly saying to yourself, 'It is speaking to me ; I am the one it is talking about'."

That is a very helpful insight into understanding the Scriptures, but I wonder if for us it applies to Nicodemus? When I read this story about Nicodemus, the more I think about it, the more I enter into it, the more I am inclined to say: "It is *not* speaking to me ; I am *not* the one it is talking about". And the reason is that Nicodemus for us is so difficult to understand. It is not simply that he is a man of the past. Far from it . . . superficially, he appears to be a very modern man : a man sophisticated, polished, educated. Yet, underneath his modernity, there is something that we find very difficult to understand or appreciate, for Nicodemus is a Jew, a master of Israel, and what that in essence represents, we in the modern world, in the modern church, have almost entirely lost and forgotten. The trouble is that if we do not understand Nicodemus, it may well be we do not understand Christ either.

Who is Nicodemus?

Nicodemus is the law. He comes to Jesus representing, as it were, not only the epitomy of the law, but, as a master of Israel, the best in the law. That is where we often misjudge Nicodemus. We dismiss him as someone who did not stand for the best in the law. But he did. In a sense, he was the best that the Jews could offer. After all, he came to Jesus, called him "Rabbi", and acknowledged his miracles and that his teaching came from God. And yet, Jesus was a mystery to him. Nicodemus soon discovered that though there was a continuity between himself and Jesus, yet there was also a complete and absolute break. For Jesus did not crown his achievement; he did not put the final touch on this flower of Israel; he demanded a new birth. That is, a death and resurrection. And Nicodemus was both mystified and shocked: "How can these things be?"

And it is here that the gulf between us and Nicodemus is so great. It is so difficult for us to say "I am the one it is talking about", not because we

Be Done on Earth

are better than Nicodemus, but because we are worse. Nicodemus is someone who in his life, in his struggle to find the truth, to live according to the will of God, is better than we are. Nicodemus is one who took seriously the fact that God did have a will, and that that will was to be *done* on earth as it was in heaven. "Thy will be done *on earth* as it is in heaven" is a part of the Lord's prayer, part of his teaching that Nicodemus admitted came from God, which Nicodemus understood, and which we may not.

We may not understand it, and we may not understand Nicodemus, because we no longer take the law seriously. I think our treatment of the Sabbath is symptomatic of this. It is not a matter that Sunday should be observed one way or another. But the question is no longer even a live one for us. We do not even struggle with it any more. We take Sunday for ourselves, and for our work, without even bothering to ask God why he made one of his Ten Commandments: "Remember the Sabbath and keep it holy". We are so complacent, so self-satisfied that we know how to keep it holy, that we no longer "remember" it. And the same is true of much of the rest of the law. The law no longer is the cause of an existential struggle within us. For us, as for the Marxist, the law is progressive and dialectical. Or, as for

(A meditation given by Keith Bridston at the Executive Committee meeting in Oxford)

the humanist, the law is synthetic and relative. But the living struggle with the law, the life and death struggle with the holy will of God, no longer brings us to Christ, as it brought Nicodemus. For precisely because Nicodemus, as the master of Israel, loved the law, and sincerely tried to keep it, he came to Jesus. He saw something in Jesus that was greater even than the law, though he was not sure what it was.

But can we understand this? Has the law of God become this real to us? As real as for Luther, the monk with callouses on his knees? Or as for St. Paul, the super-Pharisee? Because we have not faced the law as a Paul, or Luther, or even a Nicodemus, grace always tends to be for us "easy grace", as Bonhoeffer called it. And the grace of Christ is not so, for it is a "bloody grace".

Who is Christ?

Christ is the Gospel. He is the one who releases us from the bondage of the law.

But if the law does not bind us? If it has never bound us? What can Christ mean? If we have not really and truly struggled to be holy and righteous by ourselves, can we really and truly understand how Christ alone can make us holy and righteous? Can Christ forgive us if we do not think we need to be forgiven?

Christ was a scandal to Nicodemus. Christ challenged the holiness and righteousness, which for Nicodemus became the pride and security of his whole life. Nicodemus could not accept Christ because his own holiness and righteousness stood between. *Because* Nicodemus took the will of God really seriously — not just something for heaven, but also on the earth — Christ was scandalous to him.

The disturbing thing is that we have not reached the level of Nicodemus. Christ is no scandal to us because the will of God is something we seldom take with the utmost seriousness. If we do not dismiss the possibility of knowing God's will at all with our minds, we at least dismiss the possibility of doing anything about God's will in our hearts. God's will remains in heaven for us.

And if Christ is no scandal to us, neither can he be a saviour. We seem to be neither Jews nor Greeks. Christ is neither scandal nor foolishness. We "have it taped", as the saying goes. And so we go our own way. We do not bother to call on Jesus Christ. We do not come to him, even by night.

It is only when we have tried to be good, when we have prayed with sweat and tears, "Thy will be done on earth", that we can find how it can be done, and through whom.



The old and the new in Singapore

The Student Christian Centre of the University of Malaya

*Based on a report by the
Warden on three years of work*

To those who are used to the mud huts and coconut palms of many missionary magazines, the buildings of the University of Malaya and Singapore Teachers' Training College would come as a shock; and many people who were here before the war would be surprised at the view of Singapore as you approach from the sea. Massive and towering over the harbour is the Asia Building, a symbol perhaps of the main interest of Singapore commerce. This is no peaceful backwater of the world, but a place throbbing with the life of many nations. Here is a city of contrasts. On the one hand we have old-world Chinatown, with hawkers' barrows laid out with fruits, and other hawkers cooking over charcoal fires on tricycles in the street, which is canopied with the colourful drapery of laundry drying on bamboos, stuck out of windows. On the other, we have the modern stores in Raffles Place, air-conditioned and welcoming the wives of business men, deposited at the shops' entrances by syce-driven cars from America.

And what of the culture and soul of this city? Competing for the loyalty of the people are all the "-isms" that are found elsewhere, the religions and philosophies, conscious and sub-conscious, of East and West. Technology and scientific research find their place, and are using some of the best brains of Malaya and other countries.

This is a brief outline of the setting of the work of the Student Christian Centre in the University of Malaya.

In the years since its opening in November 1954, a certain pattern of activities has been followed. This consists of daily prayers, a Warden's night on Thursdays, when there is a talk, either from the Warden or from a student. On Sundays, the Chaplain's committee arranges a series of visits by speakers,

and members of the Centre are encouraged to bring their friends. These are the regular events, which in a quiet way have brought non-Christians to an interest in Jesus Christ, and have deepened the understanding of many Christian students.

Perhaps as important as these regular meetings have been the occasions when a party has been held. At the beginning of each academic year, it is traditional that the "freshies" invite the "senior ladies and gentlemen" of the Centre and the representatives of other hostels to an entertainment. This has brought to the fore the fact, in some cases hitherto hidden, of the humanity of some of the residents. One recollects the take-off of the ragging to which freshies are subjected, by a quiet student who blossomed forth, his shyness and reserve forgotten for the moment, and the sudden discovery of a lark among the grunts of the entertaining group.

A highlight of such activities was the concert held in February 1956 in aid of the funds of the Centre. It was tremendous fun, according to the students who took part, particularly to see the Registrar of the university clowning with a senior lecturer of the Union Theological College (Trinity College), as they told the "Dreariest Story of the Century". Even more remarkable was the fact that the concert realized over £350 !

Although the Centre is only four minutes' walk from the main residence of the Faculties of Arts and Sciences, it can boast that it affords a quiet place for study. When the invasions of privacy during the month of "ragging" at the beginning of the academic year were making study impossible in the university hostels, the Centre was a haven of peace. However, in such conditions, peaceful slumber can descend, and what was meant to be a powerhouse for Christ in prayer, study, and outreach can become nothing but a rest-house. Great stress has been laid on the need for Bible study, but as the report of the former Warden says concerning a study on the Epistle to the Ephesians : "The response to these can be represented by a sharply rising and falling curve". The Christians who are doctors and lawyers, engineers and teachers, will be looked to as the spokesmen of Christ in Malaya, and will carry far more authority than the talk of the "expats" or foreigners. And yet people will look in vain unless Christian students take to heart the need to know what they are talking about, and learn to put it into language which people, untrained in theology, can understand. The basic need here today is the need to love God with the mind, and to study the Christian faith.

With this need in view, and the need to draw people into the Centre who do not live here, just for the purpose of presenting the intellectual challenge to students, it is planned to begin a series of meetings of various kinds, such as a regular film night, with the help of the Visual Aids Department of the

Malayan Christian Council. The Warden is to give a course of lectures in the Department of Social Medicine during lunch-hours on "Science and Christian Belief". This course is to be repeated in a lecture room in the Faculty of Arts. And meanwhile our regular family prayers and Sunday evening addresses continue as the backbone of our activities.

As you may imagine, when a country gains its independence, the time is marked by rapid development in certain directions. The University of Malaya is no exception; in fact the situation is aggravated by the fact that the University of Malaya, an independent country, is situated in Singapore, a dependent colony. This has resulted in a sudden opening of a division of the University in the federal capital, Kuala Lumpur, largely as a move dictated by politics rather than the natural development required for a stable future. Similarly, rapid development of residential colleges for university students, and the possibility that students will be required to live there, make the future of the Centre as a residence uncertain. But even if it were to cease to be a residence tomorrow, there would still be a full-time job for the Warden, and in many ways his work would be simplified. The Centre would then have to cater for such things as conferences, and be used as a training centre for the future lay leaders of the Christian Church in Malaya.

This is a time which may prove crucial for the Christian Church. There has been unrest fomented by communists among the school children of Malaya and Singapore each year for at least the past two years. Great demonstrations have been held by these children in many centres of the Federation, and it is probable that the same wave of unrest was only averted in Singapore by drastic police action, when a large number of students were arrested under the Emergency Regulations. There are signs that Chin Peng, the Secretary of the Malayan Communist Party, now in the jungle, is switching the point of attack to the student population. Communism and nationalism could well capture the loyalty of this country in the next five years. You and I know that these are not the answers to men's needs. It is up to us to see that the Gospel of Christ is placed before the leaders of tomorrow.

* * *

In a letter accompanying this report, the Warden pointed out the two serious problems facing the Centre: financial difficulties, and the fact that university housing has been increased to the point where there is no longer such need for other student residences. He closes: "A sub-committee has just been formed to consider the whole future of the Centre, with the serious suggestion that it give up working as a residence, and become a Christian Community Centre and Retreat House. If prayers can be invited in *Federation News* for this planning, we would be grateful."

The Church Finds Itself and Its Task in New Asia

AN outline of the program for the first conference in the Federation's project on "The Life and Mission of the Church", to be held in Rangoon, Burma, December 28, 1958 to January 7, 1959, was contained in the newsletter of the March-April issue of *Federation News*. One of the most important parts of the program, made up of introductory talks and working parties, is under the title "The Church Finds Itself and Its Task in New Asia", and those in charge of preparation for this meeting have developed a series of questions which should be considered in this section. But the concern for these issues should not be limited to Asia, and we are therefore reproducing them here in the hope that SCM members in all parts of the world will be stimulated to think together with the participants in the Rangoon conference about these urgent questions facing the Church in New Asia.

The Form and Nature of the Congregation

Is the pattern of congregational life as transplanted to Asia able to express the essential nature of the Church in the Asian cultural and social milieu? In what sense has transplantation produced deformation?

Are there other patterns we should work for, which would express the essential structure of the Church in the Asian situation? What new experiments are already being tried by the Asian churches and how can they be evaluated?

What can the Asian churches draw from experiments being made outside Asia on the question of the pattern of congregational life: a) in the urban setting? b) in the rural situation?

What are the theological issues involved in the structure of the Church and its congregational life? For example: the nature and form of the ministry, lay participation, interchurch organization, the nature of the Christian witness in the world, the local congregation, etc.

New Patterns of Diakonia (Service)

What does Christian service mean in the welfare state? What is the basis on which Christians collaborate with the adherents of secularism as well as of non-Christian religions in the task of serving the community within the context of common national goals? Are there limits to this?

What is the place of Diakonia in the life and mission of the Church? How is it related to, or independent of, preaching and conversion?

The Mission of the Church and Missions — What is the Relationship?

What new structures of Church and Mission will express the missionary responsibility of the Church in Asia in this period when both the Asian nations and the Asian churches have come to a sense of selfhood? What pattern will contribute to the development of the responsible selfhood of Asian churches on the one hand, and express the World Church's participation in the unfinished task in Asia on the other?

What changes are required in the relations of missionary societies with Asian churches in this new pattern? What should be the place of foreign missionaries, and of financial and other material aid from outside in the life and mission of the Church in Asia?

The New Man in Christ and the Faiths of Mankind

What is the Christian attitude and responsibility towards the nascent faiths of Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, etc. in Asia today? How much of this renaissance is a reflection of national self-consciousness, and how much is a new search for the meaning of life and for truth? On what basis can we enter into a dialogue with the adherents of non-Christian religions? To what extent should we encounter religious systems and to what extent men as men?

What does the preaching of the new man in Christ mean? How shall we communicate it?

What is the nature of the new secularism in Asian countries and what is its meaning? Does it represent a new search for truth or is it purely destructive of human values and religious faith?

What is the Christian attitude towards the secularization of life taking place in Asia? How should we approach an adherent of secularism?

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WUS IN ACTION AGAINST TB

From a report of the WUS National Committee in Japan

ON June 2, 1958 the Murayama Student Sanatorium was formally opened by Princess Mikasa, representatives of the Japanese government, and members of the National World University Service Committee. The Murayama Sanatorium represents the second major step taken by the Japanese National WUS Committee in its continuing effort to combat tuberculosis among Japanese students.

Tuberculosis is the most urgent health problem facing the Japanese university community. It is estimated that 15,000 of the 600,000 students are affected by the disease, and that an additional 7,000 are in need of medical attention. At one university, 15 per cent of the students suffer from tuberculosis and will have to give up their studies.

A recent study has shown that the incidence of tuberculosis among students rises proportionately with the amount of money they are required to earn. For example, the rate among students who earn 100 Swiss francs per month is about 1.3 times higher than that among students who do not have to hold part-time jobs. About 70 per cent of Japanese students have to earn all or part of their expenses.

Another factor contributing to the high TB rate is the poor quality of the food served in university restaurants or which students can purchase in public restaurants or from street-vendors. Crowded and, in some cases, unhygienic living conditions further aggravate the problem. It is not uncommon for Japanese students to sell their blood to gain funds to continue their studies or buy food, thus further lowering their resistance to disease.

Alarmed by the sharp increase in the incidence of tuberculosis among students after 1945, and realizing that assistance offered by private or governmental agencies was virtually non-existent, the Japanese WUS Committee began to make plans for the construction of a student sanatorium. In 1950, the Committee received from the Inada Noborito Hospital a grant of land 20 miles from the centre of Tokyo, and also secured the assistance of the hospital staff in planning the building. In the same year, the WUS General Assembly allocated 43,000 Swiss francs towards the construction costs of the 26-bed sanatorium.

Students from Japan, Korea, Thailand, and the United States participated in work camps in 1951 and 1952, helping to clear the ground for the building and aiding in the construction of its foundation. At the same time, the Japanese Committee began an extensive fund-raising program among the college and university students — the first of its kind in the country's history.

More than 30 universities organized fund-raising activities and intensive educational campaigns to make the project known throughout the country. During the TB Prevention Week sponsored by the government in 1952, over 100 students from 15 universities and colleges organized a fund-raising appeal in Tokyo and collected donations from pedestrians. Students from abroad also contributed to the project, with assistance coming principally from university centres in the United States and Canada.

On September 25, 1953, the cornerstone for the Inada Noborito Ward was laid, but the construction costs continued to pose urgent problems, and at times it was thought that the project would have to be abandoned. Additional help was given by WUS internationally, and the Japanese Committee increased its efforts to secure financial support within the country. The chief fund-raising project took place in May 1955, when, with the cooperation of the Mainichi newspaper and the Japanese Broadcasting Corporation, the Committee sponsored two charity performances of the NBC Symphony of the Air. Both concerts were completely sold out well in advance, and over 17,600 Swiss francs was contributed for the sanatorium by the 6,000 students who attended.

On July 15, 1955, Inada Noborito was officially opened by Princess Chichibu, the Japanese Ministers of Education and Welfare, and Mr. Ken-suke Horinouchi, the Chairman of the Board of World University Service. In the three years which have passed since then, over 80 students have received medical attention, and 60 of these have left the sanatorium cured.

Impressed by the work of the Japanese Committee, the Mainichi, one of the three largest newspapers in Japan, presented an award to WUS in September 1956. But the need was still great, and the Committee set out to raise 60,000 Swiss francs for additional facilities. The WUS Board of Directors, other senior people, and students formed a nation-wide committee. Students who had received medical care at Inada Noborito also contributed.

Films, concerts, lectures, and personal solicitation campaigns were sponsored at various colleges and universities. One-year campaigns, in which students and teachers dropped coins in boxes placed on campuses, added to the growing fund. In addition the Committee approached industries, banks, trade associations, etc. for contributions.

On December, 1957, over 850 people, among them Prince Mikasa, Princess Chichibu, and diplomats from 18 countries, attended a special performance of the German film, *Die Trapp Familie*, sponsored by the Japanese Committee. Over 7,500 Swiss francs was raised from the sale of tickets. A concert by the Los Angeles Symphony Orchestra, ballet performances, dances, etc. helped the Committee to raise within Japan 80 per cent of the funds needed for the construction of the ward, with additional aid coming from WUS internationally and from other overseas sources.

Murayama Student Sanatorium opened in June with 24 beds for tubercular students. Medical services are provided by the Inada Noborito Hospital and the Hakujiji Murayama Sanatorium. The length of the period of treatment is from seven to eight months, and the average cost for each patient

is 2,040 Swiss francs. Since April, 1956, the Japanese Committee has been giving limited financial assistance to students who are unable to pay the full cost of hospitalization, but there is a great need for further help, and the Committee is endeavouring to interest individuals and organizations in contributing to a fund which would make free beds available.

Books, records, gramophones, and radios have been contributed to Inada Noborito by students from abroad, and it is hoped that similar assistance will be given in equipping Murayama. The Japanese Committee has also sponsored frequent lectures in law, religion, music, etc., for the students at Inada Noborito.

Though the two sanatoria make a significant contribution in meeting the needs of tubercular students, additional medical help is urgently required. Plans have been completed for the construction of an out-patient clinic; 1,000 Swiss francs has been set aside in the 1958 Program of Action as an initial allocation towards the realization of this project. This clinic would provide antibiotic treatment for students not in need of surgery, permitting them to continue their studies. In most cases, hospitalization would be more desirable, but such medical attention is considered to be better than nothing.

While devoting its major efforts to the construction of the two TB sanatoria, the Japanese Committee has also actively supported the WUS international program and, among its domestic projects, has further benefited the Japanese university community by distributing surplus food, text-books, and educational equipment made available by other National Committees, conducting seminars and work camps, and organizing a number of educational programs each year.

Through the planning and successful completion of the two major projects in the field of student health, the Japanese Committee has admirably illustrated the concept of service in the work of World University Service. It has brought the attention of students throughout the world to the needs of Japanese students, and, what is equally important, has made the Japanese university community and other groups in the country more cognizant of the necessity for future action in meeting these needs.

DO YOU READ *THE STUDENT WORLD* TOO?

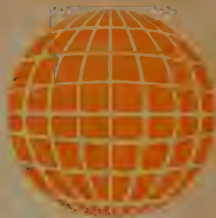
Christianity and the Faiths of Modern Man

II, 1958 — "Christianity and Secular Ideologies"

IV, 1958 — "Christianity and Ancient Religions"

Life for the World

III, 1958 — a number based on the Edinburgh Congress of the British SCM



GREAT BRITAIN

The Federation has been asked to draw the attention of all member Movements to the following statement and questions on nuclear weapons and disarmament, drawn up by a group of members of the Oxford SCM as a consequence of discussion at the Edinburgh Congress of the British SCM.

"The Hydrogen Bomb has made an outstanding incursion into the structure of our lives and thoughts." These words of Sir Winston Churchill serve as the introduction to a current British Civil Defence pamphlet, but might even more appropriately be applied to the large number of British students who have felt it their duty in recent months to make their fellow students aware of the problems of peace and war in the nuclear age. In many British universities referendums have been held to determine the nature of student opinion on this subject; student magazines in a number of universities have devoted special issues to the subject; meetings and pamphlets have made it the major topic of controversy. In all this many members of the British SCM have played an active part. Some have felt that the churches should express an opinion on this issue; others think that while it is impossible for the Church to express a dogmatic opinion on this sort of issue, there is an obligation on every individual Christian to concern himself with an examination of the moral and political issues involved.

Although the present situation preserves a precarious peace, the arms race and particularly the spread of nuclear weapons to further countries do nothing to decrease the tension. This way seems to many British students to lead only

"to indefinite co-existence under fear of co-extinction, a nuclear armament race of gigantic proportion and gradual pollution of air, water, and soil"; in such a situation they feel that "nothing can be more vital than to think of constructive alternatives, however great sacrifices their attainment may demand".

Do students in your country feel the urgency of this problem? Are they discussing it? In what manner should Christians make known their concern on these matters?

To the non-pacifist Christian, there has been in the past an acceptance of war in certain circumstances as the lesser of two evils to which it has been necessary to resort in order to protect his fellow men. The theory of the "just war" involved the use of the minimum force necessary to achieve one's objective. The advent and threatened use of the hydrogen bomb, and similar weapons of mass destruction, has in the view of Christians in this country made not only a quantitative, but also a qualitative difference to the nature of war.

Should Christians prefer the use of the hydrogen bomb rather than risk the use of domination by a totalitarian régime? Do you feel that the concept of a "just war" can be maintained today? If not, what is the responsibility of a Christian citizen in a nation which accepts the use of weapons like the hydrogen bomb?

Although the "deterrent" undoubtedly has had some value in preventing deliberate aggression by either of the two super-powers — the Soviet Union and the United States — against the other, many British students feel that the usefulness of such deterrents disappears with the acquisition of nuclear weapons by further countries. The danger of

such weapons being used in colonial wars or other local incidents, which might then develop into total wars, argues in favour of some immediate limitation of nuclear weapons to the two super-powers, pending agreement on a general disarmament convention by all powers. Many of us believe that Britain could give a lead by sponsoring an agreement to effect such a restriction, thereby renouncing her own right to nuclear weapons. What are your views on the creation of such a "non-nuclear" convention? Would such British renunciation be necessarily interpreted by the United States as an attempt by Britain to opt out of her responsibilities? Do you agree as to the urgent need to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons to further powers? How can this be best achieved?

It is difficult, although superficially easy, and perhaps dangerous to separate the renunciation of the hydrogen bomb from the underlying causes of world tension. In examining the past records of disarmament and other great power negotiations, many feel that frequently both sides have acted not with any real intention of coming to agreement, but in order to score propaganda victories in the "cold war".

Would you agree with this criticism? How can Christians bring their governments to make more sincere attempts to achieve disarmament and the settlement of outstanding political problems? What sort of response should British and American Christians urge their governments to make to the recent Russian suspension of nuclear weapon tests (especially in view of the call to all governments to suspend tests, if need be unilaterally, that was made by the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches on August 5, 1957)?

Dr. Visser 't Hooft recently emphasized the "need for a right relationship between the prophetic element and the constructive element" in the Christian approach to world problems. As well as denouncing the great wrongs in the present world situation Christians must suggest ways in which they can be righted.

Would the various suggestions for some measure of disengagement in Central Europe lead towards the reduction of tension and the possibilities of some real agreement on disarmament and the reunification of Germany? In what ways can Christians help the growth of confidence between the nations of the world?

Many Christians believe that a more constructive means towards easing world tensions lies through greater efforts by the Western powers in providing economic assistance to the underdeveloped countries. Some real measure of disarmament would free resources which would then be used for economic aid. The increasing influence that the Afro-Asian powers are having in world affairs shows the need for the West to realize that there are countries and problems outside the two armed camps of the cold war.

Can you suggest any method of linking the solution of these central political and defence problems with the other major problem of the world situation — the need for economic assistance to the underdeveloped countries?

SOUTH AFRICA

The Council of the SCA of South Africa recently passed the following resolution:

The Council of the Students' Christian Association of South Africa, representing 60,000 students and scholars from the different churches and racial groups in this country, wishes to unite itself with many Christian churches and with the interests of youth throughout the entire world in declaring as its convictions:

a) that the manufacture and use of nuclear weapons for mass murder and destruction are contrary to the will of God and the spirit of Christ;

b) that a world-wide atomic war would be a crime against humanity which can in no way be justified and must be prevented at all costs;

and wishes to appeal to all governments and authorities concerned to use their utmost influence in opposing the

further testing and perfection of hydrogen bombs and similar weapons, and their use in armed warfare;

and prays that God may save the nations of the world from a day when they would be exposed to an atomic war in which no defensive or protective measures would be of any avail and which could only lead to complete annihilation.

CEYLON

What think ye of Jesus Christ?

Why this theme for a conference?

A story is told of how, during anti-Christian and anti-foreign riots in Canton a generation or so ago, words were written across a church wall, which freely translated read, "Jesus Christ, illegitimate son of a Jewish prostitute". The story goes on to say that the pastor of the church ran, not to the governor but, at great risk to himself, to the church wall, obliterated the offending words, writing in their place, "Jesus Christ, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords".

One sometimes wonders how many Christians would feel able to make that same proclamation, sincerely and fearlessly today, living as they do amidst the mounting social, political, cultural and communal, and even religious ten-

sions of 1958. To put it differently, "Is it true that to many of us Christians, and to students in particular, the name *Jesus Christ* is little more than a party label, a totem symbol? How many of us can say that we have really moulded our lives on that name, understanding for ourselves the profound experience of owning it, understanding in all their power and sanctity such terms as *Our Saviour*, *Our Lord*, or the *Son of God*? What is the meaning for us of that time-honoured formula we keep repeating at the end of our prayers, "*Through Jesus Christ, our Lord*"?"

And what about all the missiological literature we read today, and indeed have developed a taste for? Has it confronted us with the living Christ in such a way that we have been able to discern the lineaments of the Son of God? Or has the literature we read, and very often exhort others to read, tacitly assumed that such a perspective is implied, and gone on to discuss the so-called Christian mission in relation to such subjects as sociology, anthropology, philosophy, and the non-Christian faiths in an abstract and therefore unmeaningful manner? Is not the name of Christ too easily taken for granted by us? What is its compelling relevance to our daily lives, our work and leisure, our family, our nation?

Participants in the Ceylon SCM annual conference



The conference itself

The sub-committee appointed by the national Executive to plan this conference had two tasks before it: first, how best could it bring the participants to a study of "who Jesus Christ is"; and secondly, how best could it introduce into the thinking of the SCM the new program of the Life and Mission of the Church. Happily for the planners, the first task coincided with the second. It was felt that only with a real attempt to grapple with the person of the living Christ could the Life and Mission of the Church program have any meaning or significance. And so this theme, adapted from the question, "Whom say ye that I am?", was selected.

Jaffna College, in North Ceylon, was the venue of the conference. It was here that the first student YMCA outside North America was founded, in 1884 — eleven years before the Vadstena meeting of the Federation. One hundred and seventy-three delegates out of a total of 197 originally registered attended the conference. The others were prevented from coming owing to the industrial and communal unrest within the island at the time. The discomforts and hazards which the journey involved for most of the delegates from Southern Ceylon only brought into relief the character of the conference as a pilgrimage: "We would see Jesus".

After the morning worship and quiet there was Bible study in groups, led by students. A study outline on the Gospels, particularly St. Luke, was prepared by Dick Hensman, and he summed up the day's questions and discussions at the plenary held before the noon intercessions. The studies brought out the nature of "the Gospel of Jesus Christ"; it demands a change of mind and heart — repentance; and it leads to a new way of thinking about God, man, and the world, and a new commitment to follow Christ as disciples, as evangelists, and as servants.

The morning series of addresses was based on "The Church": "The Church's Task of Witness", "The Church's Task of Service", "The Church's Task of

Fellowship" and "The Church's Task in Ceylon Today". Our lecturers were Lakshman Perera from the university at Peradeniya, A. M. K. Cumaraswamy of Jaffna College, and D. T. Niles, who had returned only five days before from the Federation Executive and the Edinburgh Congress. The whole conference was undergirded by the four evening addresses on the main theme, "What think ye of Jesus Christ?" by Canon C. S. Milford.

In the afternoons there were two workshops, where some of the questions posed in the morning talks were discussed with particular reference to the life of the local unions. Excursions to the Christa Seva Ashram, a few miles away, and the newly established Camp House of the Jaffna SCM, nightly entertainments, camp fires, and evening prayers rounded off the program. And we did eat too! (And what succulent lobsters freshly caught off the coasts of the peninsula graced the tables!)

The conference over, the Annual General Council of the Movement convened for two consecutive days. Among the more important items on the agenda were the political situation in the island and the task of the Church, and the SCM within the Church, in the difficult days ahead; the Life and Mission program and its implementation in Ceylon, and needless to add, the rather precarious financial position of the Movement.

What of the future?

It is perhaps difficult to assess successfully the impact of such a conference on the lives of the many students who attended it, especially so early after the event. If our students were enabled to meet with their Lord and Saviour, to hear his name resound in their hearts more clearly, and thus to love him more dearly for the rest of their sojourn on earth, then indeed we have to be grateful to God himself, who accepted the poor and perhaps even selfish plans we made, and having blessed them transformed them into a holy and fitting vehicle of communication to us. If not, we must try again, fully conscious of the respon-

sibilities we bear in *calling ourselves* Christians, and that too at a time such as this in the history of our land—a land which only yesterday “spurned him in the streets of the city”. It is only with a clearer understanding of him, from whom all life proceeds, today, that we enter into all the mysteries of a creative encounter with him in our study of the Life and Mission of the Church tomorrow, a study that has been long overdue in the world of our generation.

MAXWELL DE ALWIS.

LIBERIA

We have received the following letter from Liberia :

We have just concluded our first National Student Christian Conference. The theme was “The Witness of a Christian College Student in a Changing Liberia”. This general theme was discussed in relation to his witness to “non-Christians” and to his “community”.

The Rev. Dr. James Hopewell of the Cuttington College faculty delivered the opening address on the conference theme. He discussed three aspects of change he has observed in the average college student, namely, a change in confidence, a change in optimism, and a change in a sense of social responsibility. These he equated to the cardinal virtues of Faith, Hope, and Love, and admonished us to let the influence of these virtues permeate our entire approach to the changes of our time.

Another address was delivered by Mr. H. Boakai Freeman of the Department of Public Instruction of Liberia on “The Witness of a Christian College Student to Non-Christians”. Mr. Freeman himself having been a Muslim, now converted to Christianity, explained the basic tenets of Islam and Animism, the two non-Christian groups which are found in our environment. He also pointed out that West African Islam has been distorted in order to appeal to the Animists of West Africa. “The devout Muslim,” he said, “will not contend that Jesus is not the Son of God.” To substantiate this viewpoint he quoted (in original Arabic) several

portions of the Koran where allusion is made to Jesus as the Incarnate One. He explained this difficulty by pointing out that the Muslim’s concept of “Son” is entirely biological, and hence they cannot associate the Almighty with indulgence in fleshly lusts.

In the discussion which followed the differences between Christianity and Islam, the features which make Islam appealing to the African, and the Christian’s approach to the Muslim, were brought forward with great enthusiasm.

In the afternoon the Rev. Samuel B. Stubblefield addressed the conference on “The Witness of the Christian College Student to his Community”. The burden of his address was in the admonition that we, Christian college students, were called to be beacon lights of justice, morality, and virtue in a changing environment with its attendant corruption, injustices, and immorality.

In the discussion which followed the theme was centred in the Bible study conducted by the Rev. Dai Kitagawa of the World Council of Churches. Using the 25th chapter of Matthew, Mr. Kitagawa developed the theme, “The World of Technical Civilization versus the Kingdom of God”. He drove home the idea that the judgement of God would be based upon the treatment of the “have-nots”, the untalented, and the unimaginative by the “haves”, the talented, and the imaginative. The witness which we undertake, therefore, should be one that seeks to manifest itself in a genuine concern for the less fortunate members of our society.

In the morning the Bible study dealt with the story of the Tower of Babel in Genesis and the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles in Acts. In the former it was observed that the diversity of tongues resulted in the disintegration of community life; in the latter the diversity of tongues restored the community in righteousness, love, hope, and faith.

At present we are working on the report of the conference. I hope to get it completed before going to Ghana for the Leadership Training Conference...
BURGESS CARR.

GREECE

The Christian Student Union launched a special campaign of contact with the country population at the end of March, with five projects carried out in various towns and villages of Western and Central Greece. During the campaign 200 students visited about twenty towns and villages carrying, amidst the festive atmosphere of the celebration of the National Holiday, a warm message of love and encouragement. These were its main lines:

"We greet you with a message of Faith, the Faith that if we go back to Christ we shall see better days. Let us not forget that those who strove for our Independence counted on God and his power and so they succeeded in giving us the freedom we enjoy today. So today, only with God's help can we build a better world. Only by his side can we find joy, power, comfort and peace."

This message became the central point of the whole campaign. In the towns special occasions of more official character were organized which added to the success of the campaign.

UNESCO Travel Grants

For some time the WSCF has been able to obtain UNESCO Youth Travel Grants to help in the training and exchange of leadership of national SCMs. Under this program Benjamin Camins, a junior secretary of the Philippines SCM, is now having a period of training at British SCM headquarters in London, after having attended two international student conferences in Europe. He will leave London in time to participate in the Asian conference of the WSCF in Rangoon in December, where he will conclude his training.

Gunthur Dressler, a theological student at Göttingen University, Germany, recently received one of these grants and is now in Tokyo, at the invitation of the Japanese SCM, working in one of the Christian student centres there. He will remain a year, attending both national and international conferences and visiting local SCM groups, in addition to carrying on work in the centre.

Unfortunately due to the limited nature of this UNESCO Fund, the WSCF has been able to have only one or two such grants a year, although it receives many more applications from national SCMs. However, in years to come this program, together with similar ones, will bear fruit in the total life of the WSCF.

K. S.

STUDY ABROAD

A record number of fellowships and scholarships for foreign students — more than 75,000 — is listed in the ninth edition of *Study Abroad*¹, the handbook on international educational opportunities published annually by Unesco.

Study Abroad describes in this edition fellowships and scholarships offered by governments, foundations, universities, and other institutions in 83 states and many territories. For the first time, awards are listed for Bulgaria, Ethiopia, Ghana, Paraguay, Rumania, Saudi Arabia, and the U.S.S.R.

Along with these educational opportunities, the 836 pages of *Study Abroad* also contain the results of Unesco's fifth survey of foreign student enrolment around the world. In 1956, the survey shows, there were an estimated 150,000 foreign students enrolled in 74 countries. The United States led the world in the enrolment of foreign students with a total of 36,494; followed by France with 16,877; the U.S.S.R. with 12,300; Argentina with 10,782, and the United Kingdom with 9,723. Leader of the Middle East was Egypt with 3,671, and Japan ranked first in Asia with 3,137.

What do students study when they go abroad? A Unesco survey of 36 selected countries showed that, of a total of 114,145 students, the humanities still held the lead, in 1955-56, with 26,342 students, as compared with 24,925 studying engineering. Medicine ranked third with 20,290, followed by the natural sciences, 13,034; the social sciences, 11,638, and law, 5,907.

¹ Price: \$2.50; 750 French francs; 12/6d.

PRAY ONE FOR ANOTHER

WORLD'S STUDENT CHRISTIAN FEDERATION ASIAN CONFERENCE,
RANGOON, BURMA, DECEMBER 28, 1958 — JANUARY 7, 1959.

Theme : God's People in God's World

Let us pray for

- the conference, that it may, under God's guidance, be made free from all human weakness and prejudices, and become an occasion to listen humbly to the voice of God ; and that it may find his will in the present critical situation, and faithfully obey his calling in the concrete terms of the life and mission of the Church today.
- all participants, both students and senior delegates, that they may be fully aware of the specific meaning and task of the conference ; that they may realize also their individual responsibility to make the conference an opportunity for God to renew his Church in the world.
- all SCMs which are preparing for the conference, that they may find relevant ways to interpret the meaning of the conference in their own situations, so that they may fully participate in the project, and may share in its blessings and benefits.
- all churches, particularly in the areas concerned, that they may come to respond more seriously to the efforts and struggles of the SCMs through the conference ; that they may find the most relevant ways to express their eagerness to participate fully and responsibly in the life and mission of the Church, and that thus they may come to find the way for renewal of their life.
- the World's Student Christian Federation, which is responsible for the conference, that it may be given guidance for its new project, of which this "pilot" conference is a part, and that through this undertaking it may be allowed to grow as a pioneering movement in the international ecumenical community.



STAFF news

Bob and Sue Bates have arrived in Colombo, Ceylon, where they will be based during their period of work on the Federation staff.

Mauricio Lopez is attending meetings of the YMCA in Belgium and of the WCC in Denmark, and will then go to North America to take part in several SCM meetings in the United States and Canada. He will also visit the Caribbean area and several South American countries on his way back to Argentina.

Ken Shiozaki has visited Berlin and taken part in the Theological Students' Course at the Ecumenical Institute, Bossey, Switzerland. He will remain in Geneva until his departure for Asia early in November.

Valdo Galland, following his vacation, attended several meetings in Europe, and will go to Ghana at the end of August to take part in the first African Leadership Training Course.

Philippe Maury has resumed work after a vacation in July. He will remain in the office during the coming months.

Ed Dirks completed his European tour by taking part in the Theological Students' Course at the Ecumenical Institute. He will return to his teaching at Yale Divinity School the beginning of September.

Frank Glendenning is visiting several West African countries prior to attending the African Leadership Training Course in Ghana.

Charles Long, newly appointed on the Federation staff with special responsibility for the implementation of the program on "The Life and Mission of the Church", arrived in Geneva the middle of August, and will remain there until he goes to Asia for the Rangoon conference.

Frank Engel, now General Secretary of the Australian SCM, has accepted an invitation to join the Federation staff in December 1958, with special responsibility for work in East Asia. He will begin his work by participation in the Rangoon conference.

Inga-Brita Castrén, for many years a leader in the Finnish SCM, the Federation, the YWCA, and the church, will join the staff during the coming year with special responsibility for work in Africa.

We welcome these new members of staff on behalf of the Federation, and also express our best wishes for the future to *T. V. Philip* who recently left the staff.